MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY

The following are terms you are sure to be familiar with, but the definitions provided may assist you in explaining procedures to patients you come across outside of a hospital setting.

Anastomosis: Connecting separate parts of blood vessels to form a network.

Aneurysm: The localized dilation of a blood vessel possibly due to weakening of the vessel's wall or disease.

Arrhythmia: Any irregularity in the heartbeat.

Briefing/Conference: A meeting held before an operation, where the doctors involved discuss the procedure in detail.

Carcinoma: A malignant tumor in the epithelial cells which may metastasize to other areas of the body.

Cardiac Arrest: A sudden cessation of heart functions, which may be temporary or permanent.

Cyanosis: A condition in which a person's skin turns blue due to a loss of oxygen in the blood. Possible causes include a breathing obstruction or a circulatory malfunction.

DHHS: The Department of Health and Human Services. A US Government organization dedicated to providing high quality health care at low cost and with minimal hassle, through a variety of services and programs. In 2018, it's headed by Secretary Richard Anderson—also the Executive Director of Caduceus USA.

Edema: An accumulation of serous fluid in the body.

FDA: The Food and Drug Association. A branch of the DHHS responsible for regulating which food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, and blood products are available in the United States. Until an item is approved, it cannot be legally sold to consumers.

Glasgow Coma Scale: A system used to quantify levels of consciousness. The score is determined by whether or not the person can comprehend their present situation, or if they're completely unconscious and cannot react to stimuli.

Hemorrhage: A profuse discharge of blood from the blood vessels.

Hemostasis: The stoppage of blood flow or a hemorrhage.

Inflammation: A biological response to rid the body of allergens and infection. This results in a sharp temperature increase to the affected area, which often becomes irritated and painful.

Informed Consent: The consent of a patient to take part in a medical procedure after understanding the facts, and the risks involved. At times, it's difficult for doctors to decide which information is relevant for a patient to know before giving his or her consent.

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(cont.)

Laceration: A wound or cut in tissue, either inside or outside of the body.

Laparotomy: A surgical incision into the flank of the abdominal wall.

Lobectomy: The surgical excision of an organ or gland, such as a lobe of the lung.

MRI: Magnetic Resonance Imaging. This procedure uses a body's magnetic force to create proton density images of cells, tissues, and organs.

Mitral Prolapse: The abnormal bulging of cusps of the mitral valve during heart contraction.

PET: Positron Emission Tomography. A state-of-the-art imaging technique which uses gamma rays to create a three-dimensional image of the human body. It's currently the most effective way to find cancerous cells.

Peritonitis: Inflammation of a serous membrane that lines the walls of the abdominal cavity.

QOL: Quality of Life. It's important to consider what type of life the patient will face after a given treatment. At times, a doctor may decide that the patient would be happier if he or she did not undergo treatment.

Strain: A term describing diseases of the same type with slightly varied characteristics.

Tumor: A lump of tissue resulting from uncontrolled cell growth. Atheromas and carcinomas are two types of tumor.

Vitals: A combined reading of a patient's blood pressure, pulse, and other life signs. It indicates whether or not the patient is still alive. In this game, it's displayed as a number ranging from 0 to 99.